

## Assessment 1: Scale Development – Measuring symbolic racism towards Indigenous Australians

Swinburne University

Subject: PSY30003 Psychology Project

Due Date: 7<sup>th</sup> October 2018

Tutor:

Word count: 1369



Since the landing of the first fleet in 1788, racism towards Indigenous Australians has been omnipresent in Australian society (Awofeso, 2011). In relative synergy with the chronicle of civil rights events in America, this racism can be categorised in two distinct periods: ‘old fashioned racism’ up to the mid-1960s and modern racism post the civil rights movement of the mid-1960s (Awofeso, 2011; McConahay, 1986). In Australia, the right to vote for Indigenous Australians in 1967 symbolises the intersection between these two periods of history (Awofeso, 2011).

Historically, the attitudinal measurement of ‘old-fashioned racism’, commonly referred to as the ‘Old Fashioned Racism Scale’, reflected the racial inferiority, racial segregation and overt racial discrimination views of the time (McConahay, 1986; Sears, Van Laar, Carrillo & Kosterman, 1997). Given that the civil rights movement of the 1960s in the United States has rendered this ‘Old Fashioned Racism Scale’ outdated, four dimensions have been identified as core to current day modern racism that can be applied towards minority groups such as Indigenous Australians: (1) work ethic/responsibility of outcome, (2) excessive demands, (3) denial of continual discrimination and (4) undeserved advantages (Sears, Van Laar, Carrillo & Kosterman, 1997; Tarman & Sears, 2005). These four dimensions are reflected in items measuring contemporary racism in the Modern Racism Scale (Henry & Sears, 2002; McConahay, 1986; Morrison & Kiss, 2017).

To fully understand the contextual importance of these four dimensions of Modern Racism, definitional expansion is required applying the context of racism towards Indigenous Australians. Firstly, the work ethic/responsibility of outcome dimension of modern racism reflects the attitude that Indigenous Australians do not expend the expected level of effort in the workplace nor are they willing to take responsibility for their personal circumstances (Henry & Sears, 2002; [McConahay, 1986](#); Tarman & Sears, 2005). Secondly, the excessive demands dimension echoes the belief that Indigenous Australians are pushing too forcefully in their pursuit for better treatment, therefore non-Indigenous Australians perceive these demands to be unjustified since discrimination has been eradicated (Henry & Sears, 2002; McConahay, 1986; Tarman & Sears, 2005). Thirdly, the denial of continual discrimination dimension is reflective of the belief that discrimination towards Indigenous

Australians is a historical point of view and does not apply to current societal sentiments, therefore Indigenous Australians should be considered equally capable of competing in the market-place and being rewarded based on merit accordingly (McConahy, 1986). Finally, the undeserved advantages dimension is representative of the view that since equal rights have been granted, Indigenous Australians do not warrant or deserve special treatment, consideration or status from the rest of society (McConahy, 1986).

A review of previous research employing the Modern Racism Scale in an Australian context found that respondents high in prejudice reported significant negative stereotypes towards Indigenous Australians (Augoustinos, Ahrens & Innes, 1994). Further research, using a complimentary Attitudes toward Indigenous Australians (ATIA) scale, found that negative attitudes towards Indigenous Australians were related to participants' lack of formal education, low empathy levels and reduced feelings of collective guilt (Pedersen, Beven, Walker & Griffiths, 2004). However, while acknowledging that some research has been conducted on the topic of stereotypes, prejudice and attitudes towards Indigenous Australians, item scale development in an Australian context of Modern Racism requires further expansion and refinement. Therefore, there is a necessity to develop a new Modern Racism scale (N-MRS) to measure the four dimensions of Modern Racism towards Indigenous Australians that reflects contemporary Australian societal attitudes. With this objective in mind, an exploration of well-researched scales and measures known to support convergent or discriminant validity of Modern Racism is required to support the new scale.

Social Dominance Orientation (SDO), the want of one group to control another group via hierarchy rather than equality, is one measure known to correlate significantly with modern racism (Ekehammar, Akrami, Gylje & Zakrisson, 2004; Jonason, 2015; Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth & Malle, 1994). Pratto et al. (1994), in a study of university students in the United States, found that SDO is strongly related to anti-black racism using McConahy's (1986) Modern Racism Scale. The tenant underpinning SDO is that in-groups determine the nature of the relationship directed to the out-group and that people who score highly on SDO also display greater discrimination towards

minority out-groups (Pratto et al., 1994). It is therefore reasonable to assume based on prior research that the N-MRS should correlate strongly with SDO demonstrating convergent validity.


You need to provide strong links between paragraphs so your argument flows clearly and logically.

The Five-Factor Model (FFM) of personality, is an extensively employed framework for measuring trait domains with a considerable body of literature supporting its validity (Samuel, Mullins-Sweatt & Widiger, 2013). Samuel et al. (2013) states that the FFM categories trait domains, with implied diametrically opposed trait domains, as follows: openness to experience (versus closed to experience), conscientiousness (versus disinhibition), extraversion (versus inhibition), agreeableness (versus antagonism) and neuroticism (versus emotional stability). However, these trait domains interact with the Modern Racism Scale based instruments and their dimensions in different ways.




While previous research has found a direct relationship between modern racism and specific personality traits, notable trait domain exceptions were neuroticism and extraversion (Ekehammar et al., 2004). A complementary research investigating personality traits and attitudes towards immigrants found a non-significant correlation between extraversion and attitudes towards immigrants (Gallego & Pardos-Prado, 2013). For extraversion, these findings are not surprising especially where facets such as gregariousness, assertiveness, activity and excitement seeking logically appear to have little in common with modern racism attitudes (Gallego & Pardos-Prado, 2013). Drawing on these research findings in relation to racism towards Indigenous Australians, it is reasonable to assume that the N-MRS should have no significant correlation with the extraversion domain of the FFM therefore demonstrating discriminant validity. Yet, the relationship between the other domains of the FFM and Modern Racism Scale based instruments requires further literature investigation for convergent validity purposes.

Based on the tenet that the five personality traits represent basic human attitudinal tendencies, Christopher, Zabel and Jones (2008) found that conscientiousness and work ethic were significantly correlated. These findings supported previous research by Miller, Woehr and Hudspeth (2002) where conscientiousness was related to the following work ethic dimensions: hard work, self-reliance,

leisure, centrality of work, morality/ethics, delay of gratification and wasted time. Considering this evidence and that the conscientiousness domain of the FFM comprises competence, order, dutifulness, achievement, self-discipline and deliberation, it is logical to infer that the work ethic dimension of Modern Racism towards Indigenous Australians should correlate significantly with conscientiousness, therefore further supporting convergent validity of the N-MRS. 

A review of literature related to philanthropy in terms of donation giving has found that people give for various reasons including social approval, altruism, political views, religious beliefs, social approval and reciprocity (Harbaugh, 1998; Hollander, 1990; Wiepking, Madden & McDonald, 2010). However, a major factor remains that those aware of the needs of the beneficiaries are more likely to give (Wiepking, Madden & McDonald, 2010). Consequently, it is reasonable to infer, using the findings of prior research, that those who believe that Indigenous Australians receive undeserved advantages would be unlikely to donate to Indigenous Australian related charities and vice versa therefore supporting the concurrent validity of the N-MRS.

This study aims to provide an improved, valid scale of measuring Modern Racism levels towards Indigenous Australians aligned with current day Australian societal attitudes. To demonstrate factorial validity of the new scale, it was hypothesised that there would be four factors of the N-MRS and that these four factors would directly reflect the established four factors of the Modern Racism Scale (MRS). To support convergent validity of the proposed scale, it was predicted that high scores on the N-MRS would correlate significantly with high scores of the Social Dominance Orientation scale. Ensuring discriminant validity, it was hypothesised that scores on the N-MRS would have no significant correlation with scores on the extraversion subscale of the Five-Factor Model Rating Form (FFMRF). To reinforce convergent validity at a subscale level, it was hypothesised that those who score high on the work ethic subscale of the N-MRS would correlate significantly with high scores of the conscientiousness subscale of the Five-Factor Model Rating Form (FFMRF). Finally, to illustrate concurrent validity, it was predicted that those who score low 

on the undeserved advantage subscale of the N-MRS would be more likely to have donated to an Indigenous Australian related charity.



## References

- Augoustinos, M., Ahrens, C., & Innes, J. (1994). Stereotypes and prejudice: The Australian experience. *British Journal of Social Psychology, 33*, 125-141.
- Awofeso, N. (2011). Racism: a major impediment to optimal Indigenous health and health care in Australia. *Australian Indigenous Health Bulletin, 11*, 1-8.
- Christopher, A., Zabel, K., & Jones, S. (2008). Conscientiousness and Work Ethic Ideology: A Facet-Level Analysis. *Journal of Individual Differences, 29*, 189-198, doi: 10.1027/1614-0001.29.4.189.
- Ekehammar, B., Akrami, N., Gylje, M., & Zakrisson, I. (2004). What matters most to prejudice: Big Five personality, Social Dominance Orientation, or Right-Wing Authoritarianism? *European Journal of Personality, 18*, 463-482, doi: 10.1002/per.526.
- Gallego, A., & Pardos-Prado, S. (2013). The Big Five Personality Traits and Attitudes towards Immigrants. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 1-21*, doi: 10.1080/1369183X.2013.826131.
- Harbaugh, W. (1998). What do donations buy? A model of philanthropy based on prestige and warm glow. *Journal of Public Economics. 67*, 269-284.
- Henry, P., & Sears, D. (2002). The symbolic racism 2000 scale. *Political Psychology, 23*, 253-283, doi: 10.1111/0162-895X.00281.
- Hollander, H. (1990). A social exchange approach to voluntary cooperation. *American Economic Review. 80*, 1157-1167.
- Jonason, P. (2015). How "dark" personality traits and perceptions come together to predict racism in Australia. *Personality and Individual Differences, 72*, 47-51, doi: 10.1016/j.paid.2014.08.030.

- McConahay, J. B. (1986). Modern racism, ambivalence, and the Modern Racism Scale. In J. F. Dovidio & S. L. Gaertner (Eds.), *Prejudice, discrimination, and racism* (pp. 91-125). San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- Miller, M., Woehr, D., & Hudspeth, N. (2002). The meaning and measurement of work ethic: Construction and initial validation of a multidimensional inventory. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 60, 451–489, doi: 10.1006/jvbe.2001.1838.
- Morrison, T. & Kiss, M. (2017). Modern Racism Scale. In Zeigler-Hill, V., & Shackleford, T. (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Personality and Individual Differences* (pp. 1-3). Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing.
- Pedersen, A., Beven, J., Walker, I., & Griffiths, B. (2004). Attitudes toward indigenous Australians: The role of empathy and guilt. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, 14, 233-249, doi: 10.1002/casp.771
- Pratto, F., Sidanius, J., Stallworth, L., & Malle, B. (1994). Social dominance orientation: A personality variable predicting social and political attitudes. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 67, 741-763, doi: 10.1037/0022-3514.67.4.741.
- Samuel, D., Mullins-Sweatt, S., & Widiger, T. (2013). An investigation of the factor structure and convergent and discriminant validity of the Five-Factor Model Rating Form. *Assessment*, 20, 24-35, doi: 10.1177/1073191112455455.
- Sears, D., Van Laar, C., Carrillo, M., & Kosterman, R. (1997). Is it really racism?: The origins of white Americans' opposition to race-targeted policies. *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, 61, 16-53.
- Tarman, C., & Sears, D. (2005). The conceptualization and measurement of symbolic racism. *Journal of Politics*, 67, 731-761, doi: 10.1111/j.1468-2508.2005.00337.x.
- Wiepking, P., Madden, K., & McDonald, K. (2010). Leaving a legacy: Bequest giving in Australia. *Australasian Marketing Journal*, 18, 15-22, doi: 10.1016/j.ausmj.2009.10.005.